

MARINE WING SUPPORT SQUADRON 273

SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY STATEMENT

28 August 2013



Deaths by suicide and other suicide-related incidents often occur in association with stressors pertaining to relationships, work, pending disciplinary action, illnesses such as depression, and during periods of transition in duty status or between duty stations. It is important that leaders identify these personal stressors in our Marine's and Sailor's lives and intervene before they degrade unit readiness. Suicide is prevented through leadership. Leaders foster a command climate that not only promotes fitness of mind, body, and spirit, but also encourages Marines and Sailors to seek help early, when problems are most manageable.

Within MWSS-273, we will strive to understand and prevent the factors that lead to suicide ideations and attempts while simultaneously identifying and enhancing preventive measures. We will develop Marines with the skills needed to recognize the signs of suicide as well as the courage necessary to ask, listen, and support those service members who may be at risk for suicide. Our mission will be to "never leave a Marine behind." To this end, we will:

Apply Short Term Actions


- **Take any and all threats seriously.** Never minimize the importance of the situation. Assist the individual and seek help as quickly as possible.
- **Remain calm and stabilize the suicide-related event/emergency.** Administer First Aid (if required), call 911, remove anything lethal from the immediate vicinity, and do not leave the service member unattended.
- **Immediately notify the chain of command.** Internally via the Squadron's command deck, and externally via Personnel Casualty Report (PCR) and DoD Suicide Event Report (DODSER).
- **Treat personnel in crisis with respect.** Protect their confidentiality and personal information. Show concern, be sympathetic, listen, and offer help and hope. The person in crisis is looking for someone to confide in. If chaplain or medical personnel are present, let them handle the situation. If not, let that person be you.

Implement Long Term Objectives

- **Seek out and disseminate suicide prevention resources.** A current list of suicide prevention resources can be viewed at: https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/portal/page/portal/M_RA_HOME/MF/G_Behavioral%20Health/BH_Community%20Counseling%20and%20Prevention/Resources
- **Train every Marine and Sailor to help.** The training series Never Leave a Marine Behind teaches Marines and Sailors to recognize the suicide warning signs and get their fellow teammates the help they need. Our Squadron Suicide Prevention Program will incorporate this training and ensure suicide awareness and prevention are topics of discussion for all unit formations including safety briefs.
- **Ensure all personnel are aware of suicide hotline contact numbers.** National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-8255; Military OneSource at (800) 342-9647; and the DSTRESS Line at dstressline.com and/or (877) 476-7734.

Although suicide is an irreversible reaction to a temporary problem, the majority of suicides are not impulsive acts. Even the strongest of our Marines and Sailors have subtle breaking points. We must instill the "no problem is too large to handle" attitude as we seek to help others as well as ourselves. It takes a strong leader and a committed Marine to know not only when to aid a fellow service member in crisis, but when to seek help themselves.

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